

FAMILY *Ties*



Brain Style

HOW IT AFFECTS PARENTING

In *The Wizard of Oz* the Scarecrow thought he'd do fine if he only had a brain. If he would have requested a "brain style" as well, he may have better understood his companions on the yellow brick road.

A brain style is a person's predominant way of looking at the world, a thinking preference, a way to gather and process information.

Ever wonder why you and your child sometimes mix about as well as oil and water? It may be that your brain styles are opposites. Although we can imagine how the Scarecrow would have interacted with Dorothy and the Tin Man if he'd only had a brain style, we know from research that by understanding brain style, you and your child can get along and even learn to enjoy each other.

There are four brain styles — logical, practical, relational and explorer. No brain style is good or bad, right or wrong. They are just different.

People with logical preference are analytical, fact-based and technical. They focus on facts and want results. Those with practical preference plan and organize. They are reliable and detailed. They get things done and often prefer tradition and order. People who prefer the relational brain style attempt to harmonize and be supportive. They are friendly, sensitive and like to talk and teach. Explorers are innovative and playful. They are spontaneous, artistic and curious.

Conflict can occur between a parent and child due to brain styles. For example, 10-year-old Sally, the explorer, likes to daydream and play games, forgetting her homework and chores. Mom, the practical parent, keeps things tidy and does her work in a similar pattern each day. Mom has trouble understanding why Sally can't remember to do her part.

By learning more about the brain styles of the people we live and work with closely, we can communicate better, support one another and solve problems. It doesn't mean we won't have conflicts, but we may be able to resolve them more quickly if we take brain styles into account.

So back to Sally, with her undone homework and chores. Mom can use the knowledge that Sally's style is the explorer to tackle the problem.

Mom must first remember that Sally doesn't see the world in details and doesn't make lists or follow plans even though Mom does. Mom might come up with fun, creative notes as visual reminders to keep Sally on track. Use Sally's natural curiosity and playfulness to encourage her to get her work completed.



To learn more about brain styles check out the book, "The Creative Brain," by Ned Herrman (1995, www.hbdi.com).

NORTHWEST AREA
Family Newsletter

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Family

MEALTIME FAVORITE

Planning the menu, shopping, getting the food prepared – that’s all part of family mealtime. Try this **menu idea**: *Santa Fe Stuffed Potatoes, Vegetable Salad – with mixed greens, carrots, tomatoes, etc, Whole Grain Bread, Milk, and Fresh Plum for dessert.*

Santa Fe Stuffed Potatoes

Makes 4 servings

4 medium potatoes

1 cup cooked, drained black beans

1 cup salsa

1 cup cooked or frozen corn

1 cup shredded cheese

Slow Down

ENJOY DINNER

A relaxed family dinner offers real benefits for adults and children. Several studies confirm that leisurely eating leads to feeling fuller with less food – less calories. When families eat five or more meals together per week, young people tend to have more success in school, fewer eating problems, low substance abuse rates, and less depression. Make mealtimes matter in your household!



Give family meals the time and attention they deserve. It takes approximately 20 minutes from the time you start eating for your brain to send out signals of fullness. Give your family the gift of leisure. Allow at least 25 to 30 minutes for an evening meal wherever you eat.

Get the whole family involved in dinner – from start to finish. The evening meal doesn’t have to be one person’s responsibility. Even young children like being involved in planning and preparing meals. Assign age-appropriate jobs, like choosing the fruit for dessert, mixing pre-cut vegetables into a salad, setting the table with unbreakable dishes and glasses, or clearing the dishes afterwards.

Create a pleasant, distraction-free zone at the dinner table. Of all the things that can quickly improve meal-

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WASH hands. SCRUB potatoes and prick with fork. BAKE 45 minutes in 350 degree oven or cook in microwave. About 10 minutes before potatoes are done STIR together beans, salsa, and corn in a sauce pan. Heat until simmering. REMOVE potatoes from oven. Cut in half lengthwise on plates and spoon bean mixture over the top. SPRINKLE about ¼ cup cheese over each potato. SERVE while hot.

Nutrition Facts per serving: 396 calories, 88 calories from fat; 9.8g total fat, 6.2g saturated fat; 25mg cholesterol; 403mg sodium, 63.3g total carbohydrate, 9.7g dietary fiber, 5.1g sugars, 16.4g protein. Source: *Food and Fun for Healthy Families*, 2008 Nutrition Calendar, ISU Extension

time atmosphere, this is the most important. Ask the whole family to turn off electronic gizmos (TV, DVD, PDA, computer, radio, MP3 player, non-emergency cell phones) for just 30 minutes. Background music is fine – at a low volume. The goal is to provide a relatively quiet, relaxed time to enjoy food and being

together. A low stress mealtime environment helps to control overeating and to improve digestion after eating.

Make family conversations the centerpiece of your time together. Pleasant conversations make good meals even better. They help young children expand their vocabulary and other language skills. They help parents learn what is going on in the lives of their children. They help everyone feel more secure and connected in a confusing and often overwhelming world.

For more information on the benefits of family mealtime and how to make family mealtime happen for your household, see the Iowa State University Extension publication “Say ‘YES’ to family meals,” Pm 1842. Available through Iowa ISU Extension offices or at www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1842.pdf

Source: *Eat Right Montana*, April 2008 – a coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles.

Freezing

YOUR CREDIT REPORT

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After July 1, 2008 Iowa consumers have the ability to freeze their credit reports. When should you use this service and how should it be managed?

Iowa consumers can now request that the three reporting agencies (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion) place a freeze on their credit reports. You must send a certified letter requesting that the account be frozen, include verification documents, and pay a \$10 fee to each agency. If you are an identity theft victim you can freeze the account at no cost by sending a copy of the police report.



When someone has stolen your identity and applied for a credit card or loan in your name the bank or business usually checks your credit report prior to issuing a new account. The freeze denies the business access and will result in the denial of credit.

A credit report freeze stays in effect until you request that it be lifted. If you are applying for work, insurance, a new mortgage or loan, or credit account you can lift it for a period of time, or for a specific creditor, or permanently. After you send your letter asking for the freeze, each of the credit reporting agencies will send you a Personal Identification Number (PIN). You will also get instructions on how to lift the freeze. There are a variety of ways to lift the freeze (by mail, phone, or internet) using your PIN. The fee for lifting the freeze is \$10. You can avoid paying \$30 to have all three agencies lift the freeze if you ask what credit agencies will be contacted.

Placing a credit freeze on your reports will not lower your credit score. It may create a delay in loan approval. You will still be able to access your free credit report (www.annualcreditreport.com). Existing creditors, collection agencies and government agencies will still have access to your information.

A credit freeze will not prevent all types of identity theft. There are accounts that do not require a credit check and a thief can use existing accounts and cards. A freeze will only prevent opening a new line of credit.

Frequent travelers to other states, college students, and individuals who have been notified that their personal information has been compromised may find a credit report freeze a useful tool to prevent identity theft.

Addresses and specific information required by each credit agency can be found at the Iowa Attorney Generals consumer page at the following address: http://www.iowaattorneygeneral.org/consumer_advisories/credit_finance/Freezing_Your_Credit_Reports_Advisory.pdf

